

NOTABLE MICROLEPIDOPTERA FROM EAST SUTHERLAND IN 1996

¹M.R. YOUNG AND ²P.F. ENTWISTLE¹ Culterty Field Station, Aberdeen University, Newburgh, Aberdeenshire AB51 6AA.² Rhivra, Spinningdale, by Ardgay, Sutherland IV24 3AE

THERE IS A striking series of interesting habitats along the south- and east-facing shores of the Dornich Firth in East Sutherland (VC107). There are mixed woodlands at Migdale; oakwood and bog at Spinningdale; base-rich dunes at Dornoch and Embo; and alder and pine woods around Loch Fleet. The climate here is both drier and warmer than even a few miles inland, favouring Lepidoptera and mercifully reducing the numbers of Scottish midges to tolerable levels.

Amongst the many species of microlepidoptera collected in this area in 1996 by PFE, and identified by MRY, three are of particular note. On 25 March 1996 an adult *Caryocolum junctella* (Douglas) was beaten from pine foliage at Migdale Wood, near Bonar Bridge. Apparently the only recent Scottish record for *C. junctella* is one for Perthshire (VC88), passed to A.M. Emmet for collation in his accumulated set of vice-county records. Other records listed in the *Scottish Insect Record Index* (SIRI) (Shaw, 1987), or held by Emmet, include VC95 (Moray) from 1891; VC96 (Easternness) probably from 1919 (Whittle Collection, BM(NH)); and VC97 (Westernness) (undated, Adkin Collection (BM(NH))). The record for "Moray" attributed to Salvage and Huemer (1988) could refer to that from VC95, as could the note "Scotland", in Huemer (1993), which may also refer to all the above. This species feeds as a larva on *Cerastium* spp., usually in damp meadows and marshes, which are common near Migdale.

On 26 May 1996 PFE bred a male *Stigmella spinosissimae* (Waters) from leaves of *Rosa pimpinellifolia* L. from Coul Links, Embo collected in autumn 1995. Its identity was confirmed following dissection of the genitalia. Previous Scottish records are first of larvae in mines on *R. pimpinellifolia* at Papadil on the Inner Hebridean island of Rum (VC104) in 1969. These larvae were identified by E.C. Pelham-Clinton and the record appears in several collations of Rum insects, including Wormell (1983). Next K.P. Bland bred specimens from the coast of East Lothian (VC82) in 1978 (Bland, 1978), also confirmed by E.C. Pelham-Clinton. Finally, Emmet recorded mines from the coast of Wigtown (VC74) in 1994 (Emmet, 1995). In September 1996 many more mined leaves of *R. pimpinellifolia* were collected by PFE and Jonathon Hughes (Scottish Wildlife Trust warden for Loch Fleet) at Coul Links and some of these mines have the characteristics of *S. spinosissimae*, although others appear more similar to *S. anomalella*. Adults reared from both types were all *S. spinosissimae*.

These base-rich dunes, with abundant burnet rose and juniper, are also the place where R.J.B. Hoare recorded the first British specimens of *Caryocolum blandelloides* Karsholt in 1994 (Hoare, 1995). Two further adults were found there by MRY in August 1996.

Finally an adult *Olethreutes bifasciana* was found at Spinningdale Woods, near Dornoch in July 1996. There are previous records of this species from VC80

(Roxburghshire), VC83 (Midlothian), VC95 (Moray), and VC96 (Easterness), (records of Tortricidae collated by E. Hancock). The most recent of these are from Melrose (VC80) in 1980, collected by Andrew Buckham and from MacAlpine's survey of the Cairngorm National Nature Reserve from 1976-79 (MacAlpine, 1979); he recorded the species from Loch an Eilean, Rothiemurchus. Coincidentally, R. Leverton also brought one to MRY for identification that he had caught at Cornhill, Banff (VC94) in July 1996.

Acknowledgements

We are most grateful for kind help from Keith Bland, Maitland Emmet, Ted Hancock, Jonathon Hughes and Roy Leverton.

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First record of the Rannoch Looper moth *Semiothisa brunneata* Thunb. (Lep.: Geometridae) for the Isle of Wight

On the night of 18/19 June 1997 an individual of the Rannoch Looper moth *S. brunneata* was captured in a Robinson trap I was operating near the village of Shalfleet on the Isle of Wight. The Isle of Wight moth recorders Peter Cramp and Sam Knill-Jones have confirmed that this is the first time the species has been recorded on the Isle of Wight. The moth is an occasional migrant in England and I know of two specimens which reached Norfolk a week previously, on 11 June, one at Holkham, the other at Docking (M. Tunmore, *pers. comm.*). The moth has reached the neighbouring vice-counties of North and South Hampshire previously. Barry Goater's county list and supplement for Hampshire and the Isle of Wight (1974, 1988) reports a singleton at light at St Ives, near Ringwood on 31 July 1988, which was the first record for the vice-county of South Hampshire, and one was previously recorded in North Hampshire at Whitehill on 26 June 1960.– PAUL WARING, 1366 Lincoln Road, Werrington, Peterborough PE4 6LS.